

# SOCIAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

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## 1938 TRAFFIC TOLL DOWN 10,200

Figures released by the National Safety Council and published in Public Safety for February 1939 show a decrease of more than 7,400 in fatal traffic accidents in the United States during 1938. Forty-five states reduced their traffic toll during the year and in 20 of them the decrease was 20% or more. The following table gives the figures for the years 1934 - 1938:

YEAR	Motor Vehicle Deaths	Popu- lation Rate*	Vehicle Mileage Rate**
1934	36,101	28.5	18.4
1935	36,369	28.5	17.4
1936	38,089	29.7	16.4
1937	39,643	30.7	15.9
1938	32,000	24.6	12.7

\*Deaths per 100,000 population

\*\*Death per 100,000,000 vehicle miles

This is the second time in automotive history that traffic fatalities have shown a decrease over the preceding year. The only other time such a decrease was shown was in 1932. The 1938 decrease was 19 percent less than the 1937 figure, which was an all-time high. The 1938 record was also the lowest since 1933, which registered 31,363 deaths. It was also below the 1930 and 1931 figures.

In addition to the 32,000 deaths reported, there were also approximately 1,100,000 non-fatal injuries and about 5,000,000 property damage accidents. The economic loss resulting from deaths, non-fatal injuries and property damage accidents is estimated at \$1,400,000,000. Less than a third of the nation's death toll (9,300) occurred in cities of more than 10,000 population and more than two-thirds in cities of less than 10,000 population and in rural areas.

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## URGE REVISION OF NEUTRALITY ACT

Revision of the Neutrality Act is urged in a joint statement released by the Church Peace Union and the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches, adopted by these bodies at their January meetings. Convinced by "the economic and cultural facts of modern life" and by faith in the fatherhood of God and essential brotherhood of man of the interdependence of nations and friendship and co-operation between peoples is the sole hope of enduring peace, they also believe that "direct or indirect aid to a state engaged in aggressive war is not in keeping with the principles of international friendship" and is "an unfriendly act to the victims of aggression, to the potential victims of further aggressions,...and, in a real sense, to the people of the aggressor state." "Aid to aggression", the report declares, "is participation in aggression, and is the negation of true international friendship."

The Neutrality Act needs to be revised, declares the statement, because its present provisions give psychological and economic aid to states engaged in or threatening aggressive war. The present Act puts the aggressor and the victim on the same footing and makes no distinction between nations which keep their word and those who do not. It makes us appear not to care what peoples are oppressed or how many helpless men, women, and children are killed, so long as we are left alone. The so-called "cash and carry" provisions, if applied, "would have given economic aid to aggressor states, because the latter have been in a position to buy and transport more war materials from the United States. Such a neutrality policy is "at its best inadequate"; "at its worst immoral". It encourages

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## N.B.C. BANS LIQUOR ADVERTISING

National Broadcasting Company, which has had a long-standing ban against advertising distilled liquors over the air has recently extended the order to forbid advertising beer and wines. The action was announced by Major Lenox R. Lohr, president of the NBC as the federal communications commission resumed its inquiry into radiomonopoly and network operations early in January. Major Lohr explained the adoption of the policy as "in the public interest".

On December 13, 1938 the National Association of Broadcasters, representing 397 of the nation's 700 stations, including all the large ones, adopted a resolution declaring "it is the sense of the NAB board of directors that American broadcasting stations should not carry advertising for distilled spirits". Unlike the NBC action, this resolution does not affect the advertising of beer and wine.

## LABOR RELATIONS BOARD JEOPARDIZED

Efforts to cripple or destroy the National Labor Relations Board continue to bob up in Congress. The latest is a bill (1392) introduced by Senator Holman of Oregon which would abolish the Board and set up in its place a Labor Relations Division in the Department of Labor under a Labor Relations Commissioner to investigate complaints of unfair labor practices. There would also be created a Labor Appeals Board, composed of 9 members, not less than 7 to be lawyers, before whom complaints of violations would be instituted and prosecuted. Attorneys appointed to represent the Commissioner would be subject to the direction of the Attorney General, except in proceedings before the Board of Appeals. Appeal from decisions of the Board could be taken to the court by either the Commissioner or the defendant. This bill, if enacted into law would distribute functions now carried by the NLRB between the Commissioner, the Attorney General and the Labor Appeals Board, with consequent loss of effectiveness. Figures show that the NLRB has worked effectively and satisfactorily in a huge majority of the cases brought before it, with only a minority of reactionary employers in opposition to its findings. Proponents of revision were encouraged by the Supreme Court decision in the Fansteel case overruling the Board's decision.

## RELIEF COSTS IN 1938

Federal, state, and local expenditures for aid to the needy in continental United States during the calendar year 1938, including earnings of persons certified as in need of relief employed on projects of the WPA amounted to \$2,995,705,000, according to figures released by the Social Security Board on Feb. 12, 1939. This does not include administrative expense or earnings of non-certified workers on work programs. Expenditures for 1938 represent an increase of more than 28% over the total expenditures of 1937 of \$2,332,769,000.

It is estimated that 6,500,000 different families, comprising 20,900,000 persons received public aid in Dec. 1938 from federal, state, and local funds. This was one percent below the revised total for November, when 6,600,000 households, comprising 21,300,000 persons received aid.

## CHURCH COMMITTEE FOR CHINA RELIEF NOT ADVOCATING BOYCOTT OR EMBARGO

The Church Committee for China Relief, constituted by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America the Foreign Missions Council of N. America and the China Relief, U.S.A., Inc., announced on Feb. 12, 1939 that the organization is not identified with any proposal for a boycott in Japanese goods or any effort to have an embargo placed on shipments to that country. The reasons assigned for the committee's position are (1) that the committee was formed for the specific purpose of raising and forwarding funds for China relief, (2) that two of the sponsoring groups are official church agencies which would not approve such activities by the committee, (3) that such an action by the committee would not be supported by many members of the churches who might be sympathetic to the objective but unwilling for the church to be involved in it, (4) difference of opinion as to the military and economic expediency of such measures, (5) the relief task is such as to absorb the committee's entire time and energy, and (6) political neutrality is necessary in order to perform its tasks in occupied Chinese territory.

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More than 40 churches responded to our Christmas appeal for clothing, food or cash for the SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND. Responses are still coming in.



## ON SOCIAL FRONTIERS

Since Czechoslovakia ceded the Sudeten area to Germany last October all of the 224 cooperative societies, which had a membership of 231,000 and an annual business of some \$20,000,000 have been liquidated by the Hitler regime. The cooperative wholesale society at Prague is facing liquidation because its retail outlets have been destroyed.

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Allen Huber, Disciple missionary in the Philippines reports that a "Decentress Crusade" has been launched in the islands to conduct "a nationwide campaign against publications which tend to defile the people's morality." On the blacklist are two Philippine publications, 19 American and several French magazines.

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According to the department of records and research of Tuskegee Institute six persons, all Negroes, were lynched in the United States in 1938. The last lynching of the year occurred at Wilder, Miss., where a Negro truck driver was killed for an alleged attack upon a white woman of 74. The Negro had refused to do a hauling job for a neighbor of the woman because of the small fee offered. Noting that the radiator of his truck was steaming he entered the yard to ask for a bucket of water. The woman chased him out with a stick, screaming that she had been attacked. The lynching was denounced by the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching.

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Four of the largest fruit and vegetable sheds in the Yuma (Ariz.) Valley have signed agreements with the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing & Allied Workers Union following elections in 30 packing sheds in the Salt River and Yuma Valley fruit and vegetable growing areas. The agreement provides a minimum wage of 60 cents an hour, equal wages for men and women, time-and-a-half for Sunday and holiday work and abolition of the speed-up.

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The Cooperative Life Insurance Co., of America wrote \$8,725,746 new business in 1938, bringing its total insurance in force to \$24,457,000. The company is owned by cooperatives in Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland, Delaware, and Vermont.

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SOCIAL ACTION NEWSLETTER and Social Action Magazine 1 year for 1 dollar.

## TRAFFIC TOLL DOWN (cont. from page one)

The 37 cities of more than 250,000 population showed reductions or no change in all except four. Columbus, Ohio led the list with a reduction of 62%. Providence, R. I., was second with 61% and Newark, N. J., third with 57%. Of 34 cities in this class, 17 reported reduced traffic deaths of 25% or more.

Public attention has been so engrossed with traffic fatalities in recent years that the large numbers of deaths from other types of accidents have been frequently overlooked. In 1938 some 63,000 people met accidental death from causes other than traffic. This is equivalent to wiping out the entire population of a city like Evanston, Ills., or Terre Haute, Indiana. The estimated economic loss from accidental death and injury in 1938 is placed at \$3,200,000,000. The home is still a dangerous place from the accident standpoint, accounting for 32,500 accidental deaths in 1938. Public accidents (non-vehicle) caused 16,500 deaths in 1938, as against 18,000 in 1937. Industrial accidents dropped from 19,000 deaths in 1937 to 17,000 in 1938.

Liquor as a cause of traffic death will not down. The National Safety Council, in Accident Facts, reports official figures submitted by the various states show that liquor is a recorded factor in about 8% of the traffic accidents reported. The council also states that studies in limited areas indicate that the figure should be somewhere from 5 to 8 times as large as shown in the official records. A study of 119 consecutive accidents studied by Dr. Herman A. Heise in and near Uniontown, Pa., resulting in 17 deaths and 199 injuries showed that alcohol was a factor in 74 cases accounting for 10 of the 17 deaths and 155 of the 199 injuries. Dr. Heise figures that liquor was a causative factor in 62% of the accidents, 60% of the deaths and 77% of the injuries.

## URGE REVISION NEUTRALITY ACT (from p.1)

aggression subverts international good faith, and undermines international friendship. The Act should be revised to provide for non-participation in aggression, and to provide that when the government finds a state to be engaged in aggressive war in violation of a treaty to which the United States is a party, an embargo shall be placed on all primary and secondary war materials against that state.



## D.A.R. BANS NEGRO CONTRALTO

The Daughters of the American Revolution have refused the use of Constitution Hall in Washington for a concert on April 9 presenting Marian Anderson, Negro contralto, described by Arturo Toscanini as the world's greatest singer. The D.A.R. has a clause in the contract covering the lease of the hall forbidding the appearance of a Negro on its platform. When the ban became known an effort was made to secure the use of a Washington high school auditorium, but permission was refused by the school board. When informed of the situation following his appearance in Constitution Hall on Feb. 19, Jascha Heifetz, concert violinist, said, "To think that this hall in which I played has been barred to a great singer because of her race made me ashamed. I protest, as the entire musical world protests, against such a sad and deplorable attitude." Lucy Monroe and Frederick Jagel, Metropolitan Opera soprano and tenor, joined Heifetz in protesting the ban. Miss Monroe declared it difficult to believe that the greatest singer in the world had been barred from an auditorium in the nation's capitol. Shortly after the matter became public Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt announced that she had resigned from an unnamed organization because of disapproval of its policies. The 'unnamed organization' was immediately identified as the D.A.R. Miss Anderson will hold her concert in a church.

## GOODBYE TO THE SHARECROPPER PROBLEM

The sharecropper problem is being solved by the simple process of eliminating the sharecropper, according to a special writer in the Chicago Daily News of Feb. 14, 1939. Plantation owners in southeast Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and eastern Texas are turning to day labor. Tenants are refused contracts and in some cases are evicted from the cabins they occupy. Instead labor will be hired as needed at from 75¢ to \$1.25 per day. The average crop worker will be able to get in not more than 120 days per year. Under the new system the plantation owner is relieved of the troublesome problem of caring for the worker during the idle months and of 'furnishing' his food and clothing. During the idle months he can go on the WPA or relief. This, says the CIO News was the basis of the recent eviction of 1,000 cropper families in the 'boot-heel' of southeast Missouri.

## WHY CHAIN-STORES CAN UNDERSELL

In Congressional Record of Feb. 16, Congressman Wright Patman, sponsor of a bill to tax chain-stores, records the names of 295 corporations which pay special rebates in the form of 'brokerage fees' or 'advertising allowances' to the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Co. Since A & P is its own wholesaler it makes the profits which would normally accrue to wholesale concerns and is able to command brokerage fees and 'advertising allowances' in addition, while its smaller competitors must purchase the goods they sell in the regular market. According to testimony given by an official of the company, these 'advertising allowances' amount to approximately \$6,000,000 annually, which about covers the advertising appropriation of the company. General Foods paid A & P the sum of \$30,000 per month (\$360,000 per year) in 1934 and renewed the contract in 1935. In 1935 A & P received more than \$350,000 from Standard Brands Inc., Fleishmann's Yeast paying \$12,000 per month and a 10% quantity discount, Chase & Sanborn coffee paid \$8,097 per month. Among other rebate-givers are listed Armour & Co., Beechnut Packing Co., (which paid a quantity scale of 7% for over \$200,000; a \$7,000 per month flat advertising allowance on candy and gum and \$10,000 per year flat advertising allowance on the general line), Del Monte products, Hershey chocolates, Colgate-Palmolive-Peet soaps, Heinz pickles Kraft-Phenix cheese, Kingan & Co., meats Lipton teas, Philip Morris, Marlboro, and Chesterfield cigarettes, Pillsbury flour, Van Camp canned goods, Wrigley chewing gum, American, National, and California-Hawaiian sugar refining companies, and many others.

A & P is owned largely by the Hartford family which owns or holds in trust 75% of the 20,000,000 shares of common stock. Net sales amount to approximately \$840,000,000, or about 8% of the nation's grocery business.

## HEARING ON ANTI-LYNCHING BILL

Reports from Washington indicate that hearings will soon begin on the Van Nuys Anti-Lynching Bill. Write your Congressman asking him to support it.